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# FOREIGN POLICY BULLETIN

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## JAPANESE CABINET SHAKEN BY DEFEATS AND INTERNAL CRITICISM

BY LAWRENCE K. ROSINGER

*Mr. Rosinger has just returned from the Ninth Conference of the Institute of Pacific Relations, held in Hot Springs, Virginia, January 6-17. The subject of the Conference was "Security and Development in the Post-War Pacific."*

PREMIER Kuniaki Koiso's Japanese cabinet, which assumed office last July after the American seizure of Saipan, is facing a crisis of growing intensity. As American troops move inland on Luzon in the direction of Manila and carrier planes of the United States Navy strike out at objectives in Indo-China and Formosa, as well as along the China coast, Koiso seems threatened by the fate that befell his predecessor, Hideiki Tojo. At the moment, however, the Premier is making a determined effort to stabilize his régime and carry through measures designed to allay criticism. A far-reaching manpower mobilization law has been announced, and a considerable amount of political maneuvering is going on behind the scenes. Koiso has also informed the Japanese people—in a speech delivered before the Diet on January 21—that their country is on the dividing line between survival and death and that greater unity is needed, so that Japan can fight better, "no matter when or where the enemy may attempt to invade our land."

Actually the most immediate threat to Japan is not that of invasion, but rather the possibility of blockade and increasing air attacks. Possession of Luzon will bring American planes closer to southern Japan and will help the United States to cut the sea routes from the Japanese homeland to South China, Indo-China and the territories in Southeast Asia that were seized so quickly after Pearl Harbor. A sea and air blockade would become almost complete if—as the Japanese fear—American troops should follow up their actions in the Philippines with landings on the China coast or Formosa, or perhaps both. The Japanese empire would then be reduced to the home islands and the inner zone of Manchuria, Korea and

North China. These continental areas, it is true, are of great importance, but would themselves be exposed to attack once Japan had been stripped of its outer defenses.

WHAT WILL MOSCOW DO? Under the circumstances it is unlikely that any Japanese cabinet can hope to enjoy a period of stability, especially since Japan's European partner, Germany, is threatened with defeat. Russia's massive drives into East Prussia and Silesia confront Japan with the possibility that at some time in 1945 the full force of American and British power will be free for use in the Far East and that the U.S.S.R. may take a hand in the war in Asia, either this year or later. Recently the Russians have become increasingly outspoken in referring to Japan, and Tokyo clearly is worried about Moscow's intentions.

The crucial test will come on or before April 13, 1945, when four years will have passed since the Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact was signed. According to the terms of that treaty—which was concluded for a five-year period—if either party wishes to terminate the agreement, notice must be given one year before the expiration date. Should notice not be given, the treaty would automatically be extended for another five years. The Japanese have stated that they expect Britain and the United States to do their utmost "in the coming weeks to secure at least Russia's moral co-belligerency in respect of the Pacific war, if not her full embroilment." In this connection, the forthcoming Anglo-American-Soviet discussions may play a significant role, for it is not impossible that Soviet-Japanese relations will come up for consideration, or that the decisions taken on Europe will affect these relations.

FISSURES IN JAPANESE UNITY. Apart from the problems of diplomacy and the war fronts overseas, Japan is faced by growing food difficulties at home, the need to evacuate people and industries

from large cities because of air raids, and the patent inability of Japanese industry—however it may stretch and strain—to compete with the industrial output of the United States. There are suggestions that, under the pressure of all these difficulties, some of the conflicts of interest within ruling circles are becoming more pronounced. Important differences of opinion exist as to the desirability of strengthening economic controls. In the military sphere antagonism between the Army and Navy was hinted at on January 10, when General Masaharu Homma, former commander-in-chief in the Philippines, declared in an interview following the American invasion of Luzon: "It is to be assumed that the Japanese Grand Fleet will now abandon its passiveness." Politically, it is worth noting that, according to a report in the Moscow *Pravda* of December 29, some Japanese newspapers have urged the government to guarantee freedom of speech and press. This is perhaps symptomatic of popular discontent within Japan.

The existence of difficulties and divided councils, however, should not be exaggerated or permitted to

arouse false hopes in the nations fighting Japan. Although Japan faces a grim prospect; it retains great possibilities of resistance in view of the geographic obstacles to United Nations operations in the Far East. Moreover, in a period of grave crisis—but one in which disaster is not yet upon the nation—there will be a powerful tendency among Japan's rulers to subordinate all conflicts and establish the strongest kind of administration, to fight as effectively as possible abroad and maintain order at home.

These possibilities help to explain Foreign Minister Shigemitsu's statement of January 21 to the Diet that Japan and the U.S.S.R. are "maintaining very close contact" and that negotiations on "many proposed plans" are being carried forward. The Japanese, it should be remembered, agreed last March to yield their oil and coal concessions on northern Sakhalin and also retreated on other issues. Presumably they would be willing to go even further at the present time to keep relations with Moscow on an even keel.

## COMPREHENSION OF EASTERN EUROPE STRENGTHENS RUSSIA'S POLICY

The announcement made in Washington by Director General Lehman on January 19 that the Soviet government will make available to UNRRA port and inland transportation facilities needed to take relief supplies into Poland and Czechoslovakia should set at rest, for the time being at least, reports emanating from various sources, including UNRRA, that Russia was proving uncooperative in the urgent task of distributing relief in Eastern Europe. With the opening of the Dardanelles by Turkey to commercial traffic, the Soviet government has informed UNRRA that Black Sea port reception facilities and inland transport are available for food, clothing, medical supplies and other relief goods consigned to Poland and Czechoslovakia. The liberation of Polish territory, including Warsaw, from German rule should help to speed relief to the Poles—provided that the unresolved Russo-Polish controversy over territory and administration of liberated areas is handled in such a way as to avoid future stalemates. Insufficient appreciation, among some of the UNRRA officials, of Russia's susceptibility, especially in what concerns its relations with the Poles, proved one of the most serious stumbling-blocks to cooperation in past months.

Westerners who have had to negotiate with the Russians about political, economic or military affairs agree, on the whole, on two points: first, that the task of obtaining Russia's assent to any proposed measure is apt to take time, since much mistrust about the motives of other countries still persists in Moscow; and, second, that if patience and understanding are displayed by the non-Russian negotiators, and an agreement is reached, the Russians are

faithful in fulfilling their promises. These two points need to be borne in mind at a moment when Russia's actions outside its own borders assume increasing importance for the rest of the world.

**EVENTS IN RUSSIAN-LIBERATED AREAS.** Reports of developments in areas Russia has helped to liberate are not yet adequate, partly because American correspondents have not received permission to visit some of these areas. Official information, however, indicates that the Norwegians have been impressed with the treatment accorded to them by Russia in the far northern regions of Norway, where the Russians have urged Norwegian authorities to take over administrative tasks as soon as possible. Some Hungarians living in exile view with favor the government formed at Debrecen, which negotiated the armistice signed in Moscow by Russia on behalf of the United Nations on January 20. The Italians, who have ruefully noted Mr. Churchill's statement in the House of Commons on January 18 that Britain does not need Italy, wonder whether Russia's behavior in Rumania, a former satellite of Germany, is not preferable to that of the Western allies in Italy. And, in spite of reports that the government of President Benes, which is still in London, was disturbed by Russian overtures to Ruthenia (a province of Czechoslovakia whose people have linguistic and ethnic affinities with the Ukrainians), the Czechs assert that their friendship with Russia remains unshaken. So far it is only from Bulgaria (if we exclude the unsettled Polish question) that reports come of direct Russian intervention, which one American correspondent regards as inimical to previous pro-democratic tendencies in that country.

RUSSIA'S UNDERSTANDING OF EASTERN EUROPE. The "correctness" so far displayed by Russia in countries occupied by its armies may be a calculated effort to dispel the fear still prevailing among Russia's allies that Moscow will take advantage of the common victory to dominate neighboring nations and spread its economic and social doctrines. Even assuming that Russia's policy is the result of shrewd calculation, it would still be a notable contribution to the efforts of the three great powers to reach some agreement about the future of Europe. But Russia's policy has deeper roots than the mere desire to make a good impression on the rest of the world. It is based on a far more intimate understanding of the issues at stake in this war, and of the conditions and needs of the peoples of Eastern Europe and the Balkans than is generally possessed by Britishers or Americans. The weakness of Mr. Churchill's policy in that region is not that he is by temperament and tradition a conservative who must view with distaste movements of resistance which are actually or potentially revolutionary in character. Its weakness is the tendency, noticeable among some Britishers, to look on peoples who live on the shores of the Mediterranean, and east of Germany, with something like condescension, if not contempt. This attitude was very noticeable in Mr. Churchill's slighting references to Spain and Italy, and in his puzzling statement about the prevalence of Trotskyist Communists among the EAM in Greece—presumably to avoid any danger of a clash with Russia if they were described as plain Communists. It is true that Trotsky had many ardent followers throughout the world to whom the Stalin régime is more abhorrent than the capitalist system, since they regard Stalin as a traitor to the cause of "permanent revolution" championed by Trotsky. But the political situation in Greece has for some years been far more complicated than Mr. Churchill's statement would lead one to believe; and to dismiss the EAM, which obviously had sufficient strength and influence to cause Britain serious trouble, first as "brigands," then as "Trot-

zkysts," is to try to discredit this group instead of explaining it.

The Russians, over the centuries, have done many things which have disturbed, shocked, or baffled the Western world. But they have one characteristic of major importance in our times—and that is their freedom from contempt toward other races and peoples. It is true that the Russians, who have only recently advanced beyond the stage of development reached by their neighbors in Eastern Europe and the Balkans, have had no reason to assume the attitude of superiority that some Britishers and Americans skilled in the techniques of industrial civilization occasionally show toward less advanced nations. This very similarity of experience is one of the secrets of Russia's success in that area. The fact that the Russians, admittedly by ruthless and bloody methods, found it possible to build, in twenty-five years, an industrial and military system capable of inflicting defeats on Germany, gives hope to the peoples of Eastern Europe and the Balkans that they, too, perhaps in a less grueling way, may emerge from the low-level conditions in which they had been living on the eve of their conquest by the Nazis. It is in our interest, as much as it is in that of Russia, that this area south and east of Germany which proved so vulnerable to Nazi pressure should be strengthened materially and politically, in the post-war years. Instead of fearing or resenting Russia's influence in a region where the United States has never in the past played an important role, we may find that by collaborating with Russia in plans for relief and reconstruction we can contribute to the stability and recovery of Eastern Europe and the Balkans.

VERA MICHELES DEAN

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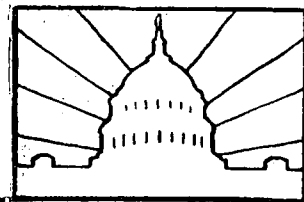
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# Washington News Letter



## FRANCE SEEKS U.S. AID TO BOLSTER ECONOMY

In the few months since the liberation of France, French factories and armed forces have become important elements in the war against Germany. French factories produce goods used by the United States forces on the western front, and the French First Army is fighting alongside ours in the region of Strasbourg. The new agreement for an increase of exports from this country to France—announced on January 15—represents an acknowledgment by the United States of the growing importance of France. American raw materials will enable French factories to increase their production, while American munitions will enable France to double the number of its troops in action against the Germans.

**DANGERS OF ECONOMIC WEAKNESS.** A further reason for the export agreement between the United States and France is the danger that economic dislocations from which France currently suffers could lead to a political crisis unless they are checked. Political unrest would be harmful to the foreign policy of the United States, which counts on a strong and stable France to take a hand in maintaining the peace after the war. "We fully recognize France's vital interest in a lasting solution of the German problem and the contribution which she can make in achieving international security," President Roosevelt said in his message to Congress on January 6.

Limited industrial operation is at the root of French economic difficulties, which include unemployment and unequal distribution of food and clothing. While many factories have been running, others remain idle, and these must be put into operation if the economic health of France is to be maintained. The cloth factories of northwest France produce but a bare percentage of their potential capacity. "Cotton reserves do not exist," Robert Lacoste, Minister of Production, reported to the Consultative Assembly on December 20. A shortage of sulphur has also forced severe restrictions on the synthetic textile industry. A scarcity of sodium carbonate has limited operation of the glass factories. Lack of machine tools checks all French industry. The mines have not been restored to full activity. While the output of coal is as satisfactory as could be expected, the bauxite mines of Hérault and Var have ceased operation.

Serious problems of power and transportation aggravate France's economic difficulties. The fighting destroyed transformers and electric power distribu-

tion lines. This slowed down the restoration of many factories, and today the power available is far below actual needs. France has an acute shortage of trucks, gasoline, locomotives and railway cars, although the United States Army restored to the French government 1,700 locomotives and approximately 30,000 rail cars seized by the Germans.

**FRENCH IMPORT PROGRAM.** Last autumn France began to look abroad, especially to the United States, for assistance in its economic restoration. On November 29 the French government made public the program of Pierre Mendès-France, Minister of National Economy, for the import of \$700,000,000 worth of four categories of materials: material and equipment for rebuilding ports; transportation materials like tires, gasoline and trucks; raw products such as rubber, cotton and wool; and food. France expects to pay for these imports rather than obtain them through lend-lease.

To organize this program the French government sent to the United States two emissaries—Henri Bonnet as Ambassador Extraordinary, who presented his letters of credence on January 1, and Jean Monnet as head of the French Supply Mission. The two men began their negotiations without the support of the Allied High Command in the European theater of war. Non-French military leaders hesitated to give up the shipping space that would be required for a French import program; they preferred to assist French industry and army through combined military channels. The French, on the other hand, sought the privilege of indicating directly to the United States government what supplies they needed. The French view prevailed, although the French were disappointed in their hopes that a certain number of Liberty ships would be turned over to them. Instead, each month an amount of shipping from the Allied pool is to be allocated for French needs, as stated by French representatives, within the limits of what the Combined Shipping Board believes possible.

The new export agreement, however, will not solve all French economic problems, whose adjustment must await cessation of military hostilities on French soil. But the agreement to provide shipping and supplies does bolster France's sovereignty. It paves the way for the French to handle their own relief problem with a minimum of outside assistance, and it may forestall a political explosion.

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